

Right 'Round Like A Record, Baby by dustyirish

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Summary:

Chaos breaks out at the photography studio.

Right 'Round Like A Record, Baby

Author's Note:

Future fic, set somewhere circa 1989.

This was written for Stonathan Week. For the Monster Hunting! prompt. And I swear, this fic started out with werewolves. Do not ask me how we got from werewolves to this, but it happened. Which makes me a lying cheater, trying to pass this off as monster hunting. The only monster here - apart from a throwaway Demogorgon mention - is the absentee mother. But I'm posting it anyway, because it's all I've got and I already have a fic lined up for the upcoming fluff prompt.

Also, I blame this entire thing on that frickin' dish towel. I apologize profusely for what you are about to read.

I can also be found on Tumblr under *myspookysunshine* - where I'm taking requests or prompts or pretty much whatever.

*Open up your loving arms
watch out, here I come.*

~ Dead or Alive

Jonathan stared down at the baby, who was screaming at the top of her lungs and trying to detach his bottom lip from his face.

The twin toddlers were barreling around the studio, wreaking havoc. The little boy was trying to eat everything that wasn't tied down and the little girl was practicing for her future membership in a nudist colony. There were frilly pink articles of clothing littering the landscape. As Jonathan watched, she pulled off her one remaining shoe and flung it at her brother. He bellowed, picked it up and promptly started gnawing on it.

It had been twenty minutes, and Jonathan felt like he'd been through a small-scale military skirmish. He'd almost rather go back up against the Demogorgon than spend another twenty here.

Nothing he tried calmed the crying baby, but he finally managed to herd the twins into a playpen that was part of the set. He picked up a stuffed walrus from the carpet and wagged it in front of the toddlers. "Look what I found. Do you want this?" He smiled and handed it to the little girl. She threw it right back in his face.

He heard the studio door open and Steve calling his name. "Oh thank fuck," he breathed, and took off to find him, forcing himself not to run.

Steve waved as he approached, but his surprise at seeing Jonathan carrying a screaming infant was evident. "Hi?"

"Hi. And help."

Steve took the baby and put her on his shoulder, patting gently. She barked out an explosive burp and spit up down the back of his neck.

"Yep, that should do it," he grinned, and rooted in the nearby diaper bag until he found a cloth. He wiped the chin of the now-smiling baby and tossed the rag to Jonathan.

He lifted the back of Steve's shirt and tried to do a quick mop-up; there was regurgitated formula everywhere, even trailing down into the seat of his jeans. Jonathan did his best, but nothing short of a

shower was going to take care of everything.

Steve turned and moved in close. "Don't worry about it," he murmured and kissed Jonathan softly, then again, more intensely, before pulling back and nodding down at the infant in his arms. "So, did we adopt when I wasn't looking, or ...?" Something fell over with a crash and Steve whirled around, exclaiming "Shit - there's more!"

He passed the baby back to Jonathan and hurried over to where the twins had escaped their playpen and were chasing each other full-tilt-boogie through rows of equipment. Thank god the kids still seemed to be in one piece. Jonathan doubted he'd be able to say the same about his tripod.

Steve scooped up the two giggling toddlers, one under each arm, and came back over to Jonathan. He raised a questioning eyebrow.

"Permanent wave at Kurly Kuts," Jonathan muttered. "Twenty-five dollars."

Steve chuffed out a laugh. "What was that, Rainman?"

"Mom of the Year brought them in for a session then went to have her hair done."

Steve scowled, eyes darkening. "She just took off and left them here? Did she even ask?"

Jonathan shook his head. He wasn't happy with the woman himself, but he almost pitied her returning to Steve. Not many things got him truly pissed, but mistreating children was one of them. She wouldn't be leaving again without an earful.

Steve took the twins on a scavenger hunt for missing clothing and Jonathan set about straightening things up, unpacking film, going through orders; anything he could manage while juggling a baby. At least she had settled down, head snuggled against his shoulder, tiny fingers clenching on the neck of his shirt. He had to admit, if only to himself, that he liked the warm weight of her in his arms.

"Hey, do you know their names?" Steve called over a few minutes later.

"I don't even remember my own at this point," Jonathan grumbled back, but it was a feeble protest at best. He realized he had stopped what he was doing entirely and was now just standing in one place, rocking the baby, his cheek resting softly against her hair.

"Did you get any photos taken earlier?"

"Are you kidding?"

"Want to try again?"

Jonathan looked over to where Steve sat on the floor amid a pile of toys. The little girl was miraculously redressed; even her hair bows were back in place. What would have taken Jonathan three days and an instruction manual to accomplish, Steve had apparently done one-handed, with another child hanging off his back like a monkey.

Jonathan walked over. "Okay. I'm impressed."

Steve held up his arms. "Give me the Pukey Princess." Jonathan passed her down.

The baby cooed, Steve smiled, and Jonathan felt something he had no name for spread through his chest.

He took his place behind the camera and started snapping off shots, each one better than the last.

Jonathan had often wondered about true love. For most of his life, he had thought the entire notion was bullshit. Not love itself, but the idea of some magic moment of epiphany, some blazing neon flash of surety going off in your brain that announced you could finally unpack your bags and relax : you've arrived at your destination. He couldn't have, in a million years, imagined the flash would go off at the sight of his boyfriend with a lap full of kids, holding a teddy bear to his face and making it talk.

"What are you doing, babe?" Steve laughed, hearing the shutter clicks. "Don't you need me to get out of the picture?"

"No, I think maybe you're exactly where I want you," Jonathan murmured, reloading and bending back to the camera.